



# Foggy Bottom News

Published for and by the Citizens of Foggy Bottom

## NEXT MEETING:

SPEAKER: Mr. Charles Schneider, CONTACT;  
an I-66 UPDATE

MONDAY, JANUARY 30

**St. Paul's Parish House**  
8 PM 2430 'K' Street, NW

## January Speaker to Discuss Urban Freeway Construction

Mr. Charles Schneider, Vice President of CONTACT (Continued Action on Transportation & the Environment, Inc.)—the citizens' answer to the Highway lobby—will give an update on the I-66 situation. He will also discuss CONTACT's law suit

against the Federal Highway Administration to stop all highway money in the Washington Metropolitan area until the area's transportation plan is made consistent with EPA air quality standards. Mr. Schneider, a D.C. resident, will be open to questions from the floor.

## What's Happening at St. Mary's Court

There is now a large hole on 24th Street between G and H Streets, where a George Washington University parking lot existed only a few weeks ago. As most of the residents in the Foggy Bottom community know, within the next twelve months a building known as St. Mary's Court will emerge from the hole.

Many people in the community are aware of the basic facts about St. Mary's Court. The project is financed with a \$4.2 million loan from the Federal Government under the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's "202" program. There will be 140 units, of which 123 will be efficiencies and 17 will be one bedroom units.

The building will contain a common dining room, multipurpose social hall, a library, roof deck, lounges and a professional service center which will offer a variety of services (health checkups, legal assistance, counseling and the like) both to residents of St. Mary's Court and older residents of the entire Foggy Bottom community. The first St. Mary's Court residents should move in in January or February of 1979.

What many people do not know is what went on behind the scenes to bring St. Mary's Court about. The original vision for the project came from St. Mary's Church which struggled for years assisted by the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, to get the project started. For the past year St. Mary's was able to see the dream of its current rector, Father John Wilbur, take a giant step toward realization.

It was not off and running, however, before it was demonstrated that the project enjoyed the support of the local community.

Many people have lent their support and enthusiasm. Chief among these key people are your ANC representatives, Harold Davitt and Marthlu Bledsoe, and community leaders Melvin Ogden and Mary Healy. Dick Palco, Ellie Becker, Bob Charles and Bea Hodgson have advocated such a concept for years.

Now, what is going to happen next? In brief, foundations are now being laid and by early January, 1978, should be completed. By late January the second floor should be poured and the building will be well on its way. By late April of next year the top floor will be poured and the brick work begun. Completion is expected by January or February, 1979.

Speaking of bricks, the choice of brick color for St. Mary's Court is a very light brown, a sample of which has been laid in the St. Mary's Church courtyard. The brick choice was recommended by the Historical Preservation Officer at HUD. The idea was that light brown color would provide a pleasant backdrop for the church and blend in with the light color buildings in the neighborhood.

Because of the promise we made to the architectural panel and to HUD, St. Mary's Court was obligated to use a light color brick. Moreover, St. Mary's was obligated to consult the D.C. Agency on Historical Preservation as well as the leaders of the

## THE SEAMY SIDE OF FOGGY BOTTOM

by Antoinette J. Lee

Behind the fashionable facade of the smart townhouses that were occupied by the military set, another neighborhood could be found. The origins of this latter enclave lay in the working class riverfront settlement that developed in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The working class character of this low ground area was maintained by the presence of the Heurich Brewery and the Washington Gas Light Company. Both served as employment magnets in Foggy Bottom for nearly a century.

The Heurich Brewery located at 1229 20th Street, N.W. in 1872 in a defunct brewery. In 1890, the brewery moved to 26th and D Streets, N.W. where it gained an admirable reputation for its benevolent attitude towards its employees. The brewery prospered in this location until prohibition forced it to close. At the end of prohibition, the brewery opened again. In 1956, the brewery closed for the last time, claiming that it had "fallen victim to increasing competition for a dwindling beer market." Its property was taken over by the government for the approaches to the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge.

More important in terms of visual impact on the low ground of Foggy Bottom was the Washington Gas Light Company. In 1857, the company located near 26th and D Streets. Over the next century, gas storage tanks dotted that area, most notably along Virginia Avenue. With the conversion to natural gas in the 1930's, the need for the Foggy Bottom location disappeared. The gradual demolition of the storage tanks proceeded until the 1950's when the last ones were removed.

Closely tied to the rise and decline of these two major indus-

tries was the influx of government offices and large-scale commercial buildings in the area and the attendant removal of the residential population. The location of George Washington University on G Street in 1912 attracted hundreds of students into the formerly quiet residential thoroughfares.

As the housing stock in the high ground area (north of E Street and east of 23rd) aged, the prosperous middle class found newer neighborhoods outside the old city to occupy. Institutions, like the university took over these once substantial properties. To the west of 23rd Street, the modest blue collar rowhouses deteriorated. Much of this low ground area became inhabited by poor black families by the 1920's.

Most notorious in the annals of substandard housing were the alley dwellings, e.g., Snow's and Green's Courts, often called "civic plague spots." Primitive water and heating systems, rats, and the criminal element were common characteristics of many Foggy Bottom houses, both fronting the streets and tucked away in alleys. In an effort to offer an alternative to these deteriorated houses, a row of low-cost two-story rowhouses were built in the late 1930's along 24th Street behind St. Mary's Church (the location for the new housing development for the elderly).

A survey of housing conditions in Foggy Bottom was conducted by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission (predecessor agency to the National Capital Planning Commission) in preparation for the 1950 Comprehensive Plan. A sizeable chunk of land was designated a "principal problem area." This shaded area ran

roughly from L Street on the north to E Street on the south, 23rd on the east and Rock Creek Parkway on the west. Principal problem areas were those in which between 25% and over 50% of the dwellings needed major repairs and/or lacked private bathrooms. (The survey was based on 1940 data.)

In 1954, a newspaper reporter described one typical example of "slum residue" in the 900 block of 25th Street. The reporter observed smoke pouring out of one house. Neither neighbors nor tenants appeared disturbed. The tenant explained to the reporter that smoke always accompanied the starting of a fire in the stove. A neighbor later recommended that a cup of salt be thrown in the stove to alleviate the situation. The reporter also observed undrained sinks, leaky drain pipes, outside toilets, patchwork floors, ceiling holes and no electricity.

The blighted condition of the western half of Foggy Bottom inspired a heated debate during the 1950's and 1960's over the future of the area. An "urban renewal area" designation was one major solution proposed. However, by the 1950's, Foggy Bottom began a turn-around on its own accord.

The neighborhood's convenient location attracted private investors interested in rehabilitating the rowhouses, following the Georgetown example. The removal of "nuisance" industries and the invasion of federal office buildings also attracted the big-time developers ready to bring in new apartment houses and office buildings. The concern with slum conditions became overshadowed by the struggle between large scale development and traditional residential values.

having incomes somewhere in the middle.

The resident population will be racially integrated. The St. Mary's Court Board has stated to HUD that it will strive to achieve a resident population that reflects the racial composition of the city's elderly. The current elderly population in the District of Columbia is estimated to be about evenly divided between black and white.

Most important, St. Mary's Court seeks to be a good neighbor. The 155 new residents will be shopping at our stores and attending our churches. Space will be available at St. Mary's Court for use by the community for meetings and activities. St. Mary's Court looks forward to being a good neighbor.

Joseph T. Howell

Project Manager

St. Mary's Court Housing Development Corporation

Foggy Bottom Community. Accordingly, the choice became a fairly narrow one. The project hopes that the citizens of Foggy Bottom will understand and that the community will approve of the light color brick selection.

Finally, people are asking who is going to move into St. Mary's Court. What are they going to be like? Some of the statistics are based on knowledge of the resident profiles of similar projects in the metropolitan area and some based on admissions policies adopted by the St. Mary's Court Board.

When everyone has moved in St. Mary's Court will have about 155 residents. The average age of the residents moving in will probably be around 75 years. The residents will be ambulatory and most will be active and eager residents of Foggy Bottom. Most will be women—estimated be-

tween 80 and 85 per cent, although many will also be men. The higher proportion of women is due to the fact that there are many more single women in the older age categories than single men.

Rents will be based on a sliding scale with no one paying more than 25 per cent of his or her income. However, any single person having an income of \$11,300 or less is eligible (\$12,900 for a couple). For the older population group, this figure includes an estimated 70 per cent of the elderly population within the entire metropolitan area. Many currently residing within the Foggy Bottom area would be expected to qualify. The incomes of people living in St. Mary's Court will vary greatly, with some residents having low incomes, others having incomes near the \$11,300 upper limit and most



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Bottom

By Mary E. Healy

Hardly seems possible that it has been two months since I had to hurry like crazy to make Anne Lomas' deadline for the FBA News! For some reason I had the idea that when I retired from regular full time work I would never have to meet another deadline—how wrong I was. So, to those of you who haven't retired yet, if you plan to remain active so as to keep mentally and physically young and healthy, just remember some of those dreadful deadlines will still be there.

I hope all of you had a pleasant holiday. Those of us who stayed home enjoyed a very peaceful quiet in the neighborhood; it was really very nice; gave you time to think about the true meaning of Christmas.

The churches in the Bottom had beautiful services and the special treat of Christmas carols provided by the Washington Metropolitan Police Boys and Girls Club added an old fashioned touch. The youngsters, from 8 to 17 years, sang out loud and clear from the Juarez Circle. The weather was miserably cold and wet so not too many people braved the streets. Those who did were most appreciative. While we were shivering outside we could see many many residents watching and listening from their apartment windows. I received several notes of thanks from these watchers saying how much they appreciated FBA's efforts in arranging for the carols. My special thanks go to Loretta Chapman who baked cookies and gave me moral support, to Tom Folk who helped me cart (literally) bags and bags of goodies contributed by the Watergate Terraces and the Safe-way over to the circle, to Watergate Liquors, the Watergate Sunoco Service Station, Guest Quarters, the FBA, Mae Rapport and Velma Ryan for cash donations, and to Alice Plaisted who braved the cold and wind to take pictures of the event. A true Christmas spirit abounded everywhere.

Another fine spirited event took place during the holidays: Seymour and Ron Rich of the Golden Table came forth with their usual charitable community spirit and matched dollar for dollar contributions made by quite a few of their regular customers to Bill Gold's Children's Hospital Fund.

And, if you attended the November FBA monthly meeting you received a personal invitation from Jan Fisher, Sales Rep of Guest Quarters at 801 NH,

to a Christmas Reception for FBA members. This was a very nice gesture on the part of GQ and the reception was one of the most pleasant I have attended in ages. It was so nice to meet your neighbors in a setting where you could talk for a couple hours about pleasant things. Councilman John Wilson took time out between two night meetings to drop by; when John came in conversation got really lively. I'll say one thing for John, he can hold his own regardless of how outnumbered he is.

During December Ellie Becker and I met with Fred Brabinski of the Dept. of Highways and Traffic. Ellie and I took Fred through an in-depth "Show and Tell" demonstration of the pedestrian and vehicular traffic problems in the Va., New Hampshire Avenue areas, plus several adjacent streets. It was so cold the day of our meeting that we almost turned to icicles before the 4½ hour trek was over. We should be hearing from HT before too long on the things they can and will do. I feel sure there will be some things we will have to negotiate around. As soon as we receive word we will give you a detailed report—pro and con.

The old Sealtest Dairy Project (I better start calling it the Oliver T. Carr building project) and the 2500 Pa. Ave. Guest Quarters are running neck and neck in construction; both are starting to put in windowpanes. And the Potomac Overlook Condo at 26th and K is moving right along; by the time this paper hits the street they will probably have the 6th floor of their 9 story building bricked in.

We are still having a problem in the NH Ave. area of vehicles and people taking short cuts across parks and the grass median strip on NH Ave. So much has been done to make our area especially nice that it is very distressing to see grown men and women plunging through the freshly planted tulip beds, and cutting across the lovely lawns instead of using the sidewalks; doing the same across the landscaped median strips and driving cars straight through the small parks. It is also sad to see the 2 or 3 women who have appropriated the lovely planted park on the north side of Va. Ave. at NH as their own private property for relief of their dogs. The same abuse happens to the Columbia Plaza property. You can't blame the animals but it sure makes one wonder about the animal owners. The least these offenders could do is to take their dogs to a less developed area on their own property, to curb them as the DC regs require, or to pick up behind them as many of our residents do.

A little bird told me that Mrs. Martha Rodeck who lives with her daughter Melita at 25th and H was 90 years old this month and that Miss M. McCandless of 810 NH who is 92 attended a small reception given in her honor. Congratulations ladies. I don't know Miss McCandless but I do know Mrs. Rodeck and I hope that I will be "as young as she is" when I'm 90.

Those of you who knew Bernice Teutenberg of 830 NH will be sorry to hear of her death. Bernice was a long time active member of FBA.

My note on the lack of Notary Publics in the area brought me some info from Bob Slusser in Tunis who tells me that Ruth

Davidson of the 2100 block of F St. is one and if he remembers correctly she is available evenings, and maybe even on Sunday. Also in the same mail came a note from Argil Galbis of Business Assistance, Inc., 600 NH Ave., Suite 850, advising that she is a Notary. She is available from about 7:15 AM until 7 PM Mon-Fri and can be reached on #833-1541 for other times. Thanks; we needed that.

I talked to several of the business establishments in the Bottom and all of them reported that they did very well during the holiday season. Good for us; I am glad that we are supporting our own.

A couple nice and interesting things happened to one of our neighborhood business recently: Pete LaRicos of the Intrigue Restaurant was the proud recipient of Third Prize in the American Express Company "Winning Menu Entree Sweepstakes". 25,000, repeat 25,000 restaurants throughout the country competed for the awards. This is quite an honor for Pete and the Intrigue and for Foggy Bottom for having a restaurant of this quality in the neighborhood. I wonder if we fully realize how lucky we are to have so many fine restaurants in our neighborhood, particularly when you think about the warm friendly personal touch that goes along with the good food.

Pete and Barbara LaRicos have another award winner in the family—their 7 year old son Peter Martin is following in his father's footsteps; he just had to go to New York for Christmas to see the Radio City Christmas Show and the Rockefeller Center Christmas Decorations. While there he was picked out of 200 contestants on the Children's Wonderama Show to receive a Batman Helicopter (it runs on batteries and is really quite something). Congratulations, Peter, don't let your Dad get ahead of you.

For those of you who might be interested the Smithsonian is having walking tours of the historical areas of Foggy Bottom. Tours are on Saturdays Jan. 28, Feb. 4 and Feb. 11. J.L. Sibley Jennings, Jr. of the Fine Arts Commission will lead the tours.

If you haven't ridden the METRO yet do it; it is really the answer to our transportation needs in the Bottom. I saved so much money riding the Metro during the Christmas Shopping period instead of using taxicabs that I contributed my savings to the Children's Hospital Fund and to the Salvation Army. You just can't beat that clean, quick, inexpensive (by comparison) service. I am definitely on the other side of Metro's detractors; I like it, appreciate it and will continue to support it by riding. Incidentally if you have any constructive suggestions for improvement in Metro facilities or service remember our friend Cody Pfanstiehl, Director of Community Services; he will be glad to hear from you. He will always take a good suggestion and run with it.

The February FBA monthly meeting will feature a discussion by the fire department. I am carrying the ball on this special subject and I do hope that our attendance will be good. Our speaker will be battalion fire chief James Healy (no relation) who will tell us many things we

never knew about the fire department and who will get down into the nitty gritty details involved in fighting apartment house and individual home fires. Some of the information he will impart may some day save our lives. Do come: let us find out all we can to protect ourselves against death or injury due to fire or smoke inhalation—or ignorance.

• • •

How many of you got a steam bath the day there was a break in the GSA steam line in the tunnel by Howard Johnson's? It was really something to see that steam covering all of Virginia Avenue, with cars and people emerging out of it—it was really spooky. A call to the GSA West Plant brought repairmen on the double and they were most appreciative of our call.

The DC Tree Division kept their word; they started trimming some of the trees in our area during December.

Have you noticed the new look at Penn Beverages at 25th and Pa. Ave.? It is under new management and Sid Rassin is making every effort to be more

creative in the presentation of his services. And, a half hour free parking is provided which should help with the traffic congestion. Sid's number is 965-9500; give him a call; give him some business; let him know that we know he is trying.

You have probably heard as many times as I have that we are losing all the little townhouses in Foggy Bottom. Don't you believe it. On Christmas Eve I must have walked up and down a thousand sets of steps getting to individual town houses. I was putting out the notices about the Christmas Carols. And would you believe each one of those houses seem to have their mail slots in a different place, each one so small that I banged up all the knuckles on my right hand and several dogs chewed at my fingers as I reached in the slots!!! I met some very nice people on my rounds; I just wish more of them had shown up at the Christmas Carols and that more of them would join the Foggy Bottom Association and help us fight for their continued existence.

(Logo art by Jackie Cooper)

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## Foggy Bottom News

The Foggy Bottom News is a publication of the Foggy Bottom Association. All editorial and other assistance is contributed on a volunteer basis by residents of the area.

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The opinions expressed in this publications are those of the writers. Their appearance here constitutes neither an endorsement nor official policy of the Foggy Bottom Association.

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Mary Healy

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Richard Palco





Christmas Carols . . .  
Christmas Day

### Harry Brown Dies in December

Harry W. Brown, 73, longtime Foggy Bottom Resident, died in late December at his home on 25th Street, after a lengthy bout with cancer. His wife Betty and a sister survive.

Harry retired in 1974 from the Department of the Navy, where he was involved in submarine and missile systems. They were originally from Princeton, New Jersey.

The Browns have lived in the Bottom since 1957, first in Green's Court, which was located between 26th and 27th Streets. They were active in FBA affairs in its early days when the neighborhood was being restored. They have lived on 25th Street for some years with their white poodle, Maggie.

The Vincent P. Lombardi Cancer Research Center, 3800 Reservoir Road, N.W., was chosen for expressions of sympathy because of the kind and helpful attention received by the Browns during the last months of his illness.

They both considered Foggy Bottom the best place around, and a high accolade from Harry was: "You're Foggy Bottom people!"

Ellie Becker

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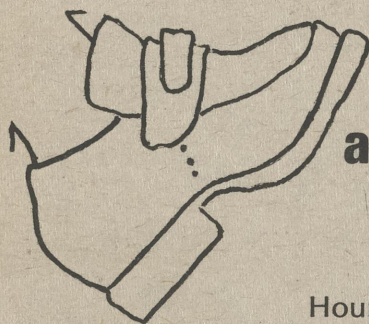
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### ST. MARY'S COURT

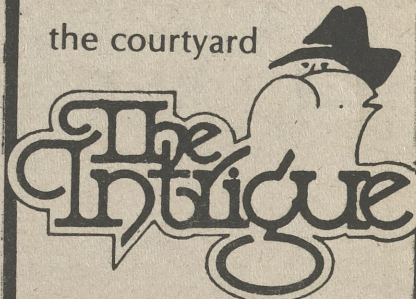
A new 140 unit Federally assisted apartment house for the elderly located at 725 - 24th St. N.W., in Foggy Bottom, is now accepting applications. Initial occupancy in January 1979. Call 537-0920 for further information.

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## ANC Business Meeting

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All Business meetings  
begin at 8 p.m.

WSOS

### Watergate Secretarial & Office Services

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## More News on the Recycling Center

Foggy Bottom residents may be interested to know that our nearby, newly reopened recycling center is now accepting aluminum, in addition to newspapers and phone books. Also, the apartment and office building pick up service (paper only) is going great guns, with over 12 buildings using this free service already.

If you wish to have your building use this service, or would like

to volunteer or need more information, please call Judy Zuckerman at 462-1964.

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## FB Farmer

In 1978 I'd like to turn over a new leaf with no Aphid under it. Aphids seem to prefer my plants, and especially my favorite annuals—Petunia and Nicotiana (the Flowering tobacco of sweet evening fragrance). As yet, my applications of insecticide have no more than arrested the Aphid proliferation; after a time they are there again, seemingly more numerous than ever.

A complication arises from our Siamese who chews and licks foliage; I must keep him from the balcony following the spraying and that may be unconsciously controlling the amount of insecticide I use. If you think that you know of a solution please write to the FB Farmer in care of the "News".

Despite my failings in insect control, there were in 1977 some satisfactions; one related to composting on a balcony garden, and the other in helping to nurse a sickly plant by means of "togetherness". "Togetherness" was tried when I realized that a favorite Norfolk Island Pine had stopped growing and began losing needles at an abnormal rate following transplanting to a much larger pot.

Thinking that the excessive root growth area of the larger pot may have caused a condition unfavorable to the Pine, I decided to fill the excess space with four Nicotiana seedlings; they grew "like mad" and flowered profusely. Although the Pine has not completely recovered it has begun to grow again. When the annuals were finally removed from the pot, 5-15-5 root growth fertilizer was used to encourage the Pine roots to move into the area where the annuals had done so well.

Potted plants grouped together in one corner of a room, window or balcony do seem to do better than when isolated, and undoubtedly benefit from a tendency towards humidity control when so grouped. It also happens that our FM radio is

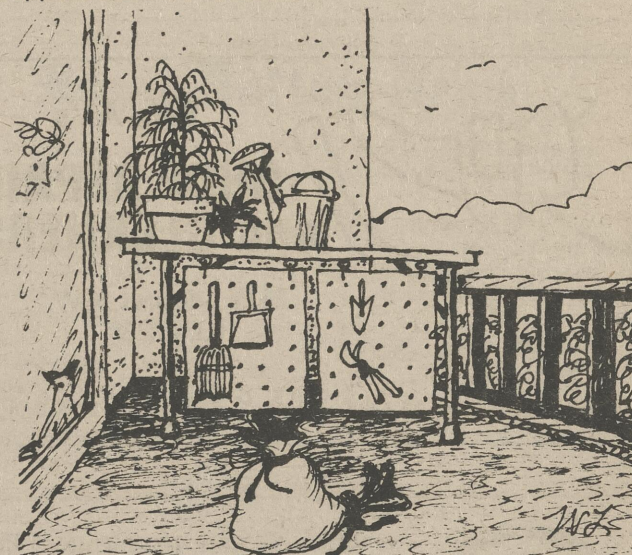
always tuned to WGMS concert music in the livingroom corner where all of our plants are grouped. I have not asked them how they like it.

The successful composting of balcony garden refuse (faded flowers, foliage, roots and soil from spent potted plants, etc.) was a surprise. You will ask, "Where on a balcony can you compost?"—in a heavy duty black garbage bag; it's kept from view by the peg-board doors that enclose the under area of my balcony work bench/potting table. The composting requires very little—just the dark plastic bag (two for added strength would be better) and two pieces of heavy cord.

One length of cord is for the bag top and the other is to secure the bottom of the bag when one corner is cut for "drawing off" the composted humus which, after several months, collects as a fine-textured black soil at the bottom of the bag. When the refuse begins to accumulate, the bag is tumbled periodically; a cup of water and a small amount of complete fertilizer (half a handful) each month will help the process. Recycling your vegetation is energy conserving in many ways, but for a balcony gardener it mostly saves trips to the incinerator.

The balcony work bench/storage cupboard was built with a hollow core door surfaced with sheets of aluminum, supported by folding metal picnic table legs and the under side enclosed by peg board hinged with screw eyes and hook; Sears furnished the legs and Hechinger's the door and sheets of aluminum. The two stores face each other on Wisconsin Avenue's highest point just before it slopes down to Friendship Heights. At the Sears garden store there is a girl who talks to her plants.

William S. Lattin



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## CIRCLE THEATRE

2103 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. 331-7480

### CIRCLE THEATRES' FEBRUARY FIRST RUN ATTRACTIONS

Outer Circle I-4848 Wisconsin Ave., NW  
"The Man Who Loved Women"

Outer Circle II-4849 Wisconsin Ave., NW  
"A Special Day"

Du Pont Circle-1332 Connecticut Ave., NW  
"The Turning Point"

Inner Circle-2103 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
"The American Friend"

West End Circle-23rd & L Streets, NW  
"Iphigenia"